the CROSBY voice

NEWSLETTER OF THE VICTORIAN BING CROSBY SOCIETY
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Hello again,

Seems like we just got over producing our third newsletter for the year when here we are again! And there goes 1983!! This newsletter is a little smaller than our last 56 page marathon effort but what it makes up for in quantity, I hope it makes up for in quality. Of course, the most noticible feature of this edition of 'The Crosby Voice' is our first-ever colour cover. Thanks for this must go to Frank Murphy of the UK whose 'Bing Crosby Photoclub' donated every single picture required for the task - and to our committee, who, in addition to their usual collating tasks, had to stick every one of them on! More about Frank Murphy later in the magazine.

Our AGM and elections are behind us once again. Any thoughts I may have had about 'whether these things are really necessary or not' were dispelled when I looked over the financial report for the year. Our little club now turns over in excess of five-and-a-half thousand dollars every year, all of it other people's money. If nothing else, the AGM and elections and Treasurer's Report all help to keep us honest.

The most popular feature of this year's AGM was when yours truly forgot his speech again for the second time in three years! However, readers of this magazine are not so fortunate as the speech as it should have been heard is reproduced in all its glory over the forthcoming pages. Still and all, if you're not interested, then you can always flip over those pages. But you wouldn't do that, would you? Would you?!

We've tried to provide as wide a range of Crosby material as possible in this newsletter, starting with the special lift-out centre spread.

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The Victorian Bing Crosby Society, PO Box 422, South Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. 3205

Executive Committee: President - Bob Machliss Vice President - Ken Orren Treasurer - Keith Dorman Secretary - Les Saynor

General Committee: Bill Bennett, Josie Conway, Sylvia Harding, Jim McManus and George Styles.

U.S.A. Rep: Richard Pearson, PO Box 1481, Arlington, Virginia 22210.

Member Reg Andrews of Sydney has been the first person to take advantage of our free Trading Post offer in the last newsletter and you can see his list of records, all of which are selling for a minimum offer of $2 per disc.

The main magazine centre spread features stills from the World War 2 morale booster 'Star Spangled Rhythm' in which Bing and Gary were guest artists. This comes from another of George Styles' Tempo magazines.

Vern Taylor, our most prolific supplier of material for this magazine has unearthed some rare 1930's photos of Bing and friends, and you can see these on pages 7,8,9 and 34. The 'Crosby Family Album' on pages 8 and 9 is of particular interest. The belief is that the two pages shown are in fact the only pages prepared and that the whole thing was put together by Kraft, Bing's sponsor at the time.

On pages 13 - 17, we have an article from a 1946 English magazine on Bing - kindly supplied by Bill Weedon of the Sinatre Society - and it makes interesting reading.

While on pages 26 - 28 we have a more recent article by American publicity man Teet Carle who worked with Bing in the very early days and admits responsibility for creating the myth that Bing got his nickname from shouting 'Bing Bing' when he played cowboys when a young boy! It's a fascinating article. (Thanks again Vern Taylor.)

Last issue we brought Ted Paradissis's book 'The Bing Book of Verse' to your attention. On page 32 we reproduce one of the actual pages from this book along with one of the charming illustrations from the adjoining pages. One page 31 you can read how you can order a copy of the book.

You may remember back in 1982 we reproduced a competition from the New York 'Star' newspaper offering Crosby memorabilia as prizes. Les Saynor has come up with a clipping that shows one of the winners - a young man by the name of Douglas Lembke. You can see this clipping on page 33.

As I've often written, we require your contributions to keep this magazine alive and interesting. If you see a magazine or newspaper article on Bing that you think would make interesting reading, please send it to us. We'll be happy to return it to you in perfect order when we've finished with it. Enough of this. On with the magazine!

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FUTURE FUNCTIONS

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LAST UP FOR 1983 - MOVIE EVENING - MONDAY DECEMBER 5TH

We're delighted to present for the first time anywhere for a long long time, Bing's 1944 feature:

"HERE COME THE WAVES"

which along with Bing stars Sonny Tufts and Betty Hutton. Songs include "Accentuate the Positive" and "That Old Black Magic" in which Bing does an amusing send up of the Sinatra singing style of the period.

'Here Come the Waves' is on video and will be projected up on a giant video screen. This gives us the opportunity to screen as support, another TV special entitled 'Hollywood on Parade' which is narrated by Mickey Rooney. Although I have not seen this yet, I believe it contains many film clips from early movies.

Please note that we will be rolling the first tape right at 7.30 pm. It is unfair on those people who make the effort to arrive on time to hold the show back for latecomers.

Venue: the theatrette of the Mobil Building, 2 City Road, South Melbourne, just behind the Melbourne Concert Hall. We suggest that you try to arrive around 7.00 pm or even earlier as parking is at a premium. Also, that will give you time to buy a raffle ticket and wade through the big box of records from the Bentleigh Sewing and Record Centre.

Entry for members is $2, member families $5, whilst pensioners and U-18's (or students) get in for just $1. Non-members - $4 a head.

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FIRST UP FOR 1984 - MOVIE EVENING - MONDAY FEBRUARY 13TH

No other dates for the new year have been finalized yet but this one has! Please note it in your diary now as we may not get another newsletter out to you before then. Should be a good night as we are screening another rare one:

"HERE IS MY HEART" from 1934

Once again, the feature will be supported by a number of rare and unusual early movies, and the same rules will apply as for our December 1983 meeting - the screening will commence at 7.30 pm sharp.

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PAST FUNCTIONS

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SEPTEMBER 17TH - EVENING AT RUMPOLES CINEMA RESTAURANT

About 40 members and their friends were in attendance on this evening and what a most unusual evening it was! Rumpoles is a restaurant that screens old movies between courses. We enjoyed W.C. Fields, old newsreels and of course, Bing, in a couple of short films that we had brought along on the night. Rumpoles is highly recommended for a most unusual night out. The food's good too.

OCTOBER 17 - MOVIE EVENING - DOUBLE OR NOTHING.

Another well-attended meeting, despite the fact that 'Double or Nothing' was one of those Crosby movies that frequently showed up on TV until a few years ago.

As usual, the raffle was well-patronized.
Girvan Paterson won two prizes - colour photos from the Frank Murphy collection. Other photos were won by Ernie Pollyket, Adrian Thompson, Ada Paradissis and Helen Were.

Gordon Phillips took hope a copy of 'The One and Only Bing', Les Saynor a copy of the LP 'Bing and Louis' and Stan Alexander - the grand prize of the evening - 'The Films of Bing Crosby'.

Supporting short films of the evening were a mixed bag. By far the most interesting and historical was a 1930 interview between Walter Huston and the great director of the silent era, D.W. Griffiths. A fascinating piece of film.

Louis Armstrong featured in one short from the mid-30's entitled "Black and Blue" and it was beaut to see Satch in his prime. "Sex Life of a Polyp" starring Robert Benchley came from 1929 and looked like it. Although very popular in its day, this short film has not survived too well. "Wild Bill Hickup" turned out to be an episode of an unsuccessful TV series from the arly 50's starring Spike Jones and his band. The low budget showed through in every shot!

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WHERE IS "THROUGH THE YEARS"?

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"Where indeed" you might ask. At the time of writing, we have still not seen any sign of the LP's that many of you paid out deposit for several months ago. We can only assume that they have been held up somewhere in Customs. Of course, by the time this newsletter is printed, the LP's may have arrived, in which case, if you ordered a copy of the record, you will find a slip attached telling you what to do next. Let's hope so!

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ANOTHER NEW ISSUE AVAILABLE NOW

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On the 'New Record Releases' pages, you will find details of an exciting LP entitled "Shh Bing" which features 16 alternate and unissued masters including one that was even unlisted!

Without warning, just before our last meeting, we received a parcel of these records from overseas. These were taken along to the meeting and some were sold on the night. However, we have twelve (12) copies remaining.

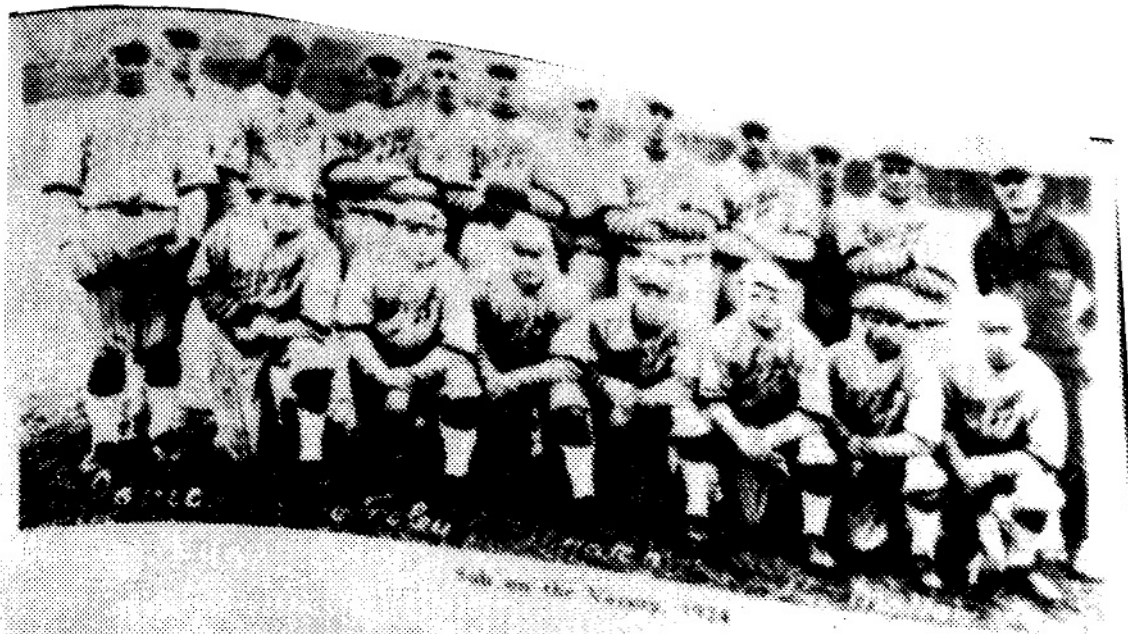
The cost is higher than usual, $12 plus $2 packing and postage if you want a copy sent out to you. Alternatively, if you are coming along on December 5th and let us know now we will put a copy aside for you. But act quickly. With only 12 copies, sales will be on a first come, first served basis and any cheques arriving after all copies are reserved, will be returned.

BING & BOB HOPE and GOING HOLLYWOOD Vol 17

We also have a handful of other imports: "Bing and Bob" which you can also read about on the new releases page and "Going Hollywood Vol 17" which features tracks from various Crosby movies from 1929 to 1964. We have two copies of the latter and four copies of the former. Cost per disc is the same as for "Shhh Bing". WRITE NOW, right now if you missed out when we ordered "Going Hollywood" last year as we are not planning to import any further copies.

(Bing with Paul Whiteman and Mrs Whiteman, mid-1930's.)

(Two pages from the 'Crosby Family Album'-- c/o Kraft!)



At Santa Anita

Whiteman's Rhythm Boys
Barrie Ring Riders

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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Welcome to the 7th Annual General Metting of the Victorian Bing Crosby Society. I suppose if a few words could sum up the year just passed, they would be 'business as usual'. With the help of our enthusiastic and experienced committee, we seem these days to have very few problems in running this Society.

In the past 12 months, we have again been able to bring you a number of Bing's well known and lesser known movies. These include Holiday Inn, Doctor Rhythm, Rhythm on the River, Too Much Harmony and Double or nothing. The future looks good on this score too. Thanks to videotape and the generosity of one of our members, we are now in a position to screen virtually any Crosby movie ever made.

Our social functions have also fallen into a set pattern now - firstly a barbecue around April and a night out at a theatre restaurant in September. Once again we have to thank members Wally and Maureen Carson for the use of the home for our barbecue - not forgetting the sterling work of Jim McManus, Les Saynor and Keith Dorman on the day. Then last month, some forty members spent an entertaining evening at Rumpoles Cinema Restaurant.

The major new service to members introduced this year has been the importing of records from overseas - records not normally available in Australia. Next year we will endeavour to get this organized on a more structured basis.

Most if not all of you will remember the devastating bushfires which swept through Victoria early in the year. To aid the victims, this club donated $50 from club funds but I'm sure that no-one will begrudge the money.

In 1983, we returned again to producing four newsletters over the twelve month period. For many members - in the country, interstate and overseas, their newsletter is their only contact with the society, and so we are continually endeavouring to upgrade the quality. Cost of printing continues to increase however. One edition now costs in excess of three hundred dollars to print and mail out, so you can see that four editions a year takes a substantial bite out of our resources. For this reason, we decided several months ago to eliminate the single sheet newsletters which were really just

duplicating the information contained in the main publication and trust to members to note down the dates of future functions. So far it looks as if we were right.

The dominating news of the year on the Crosby scene was, of course, the publication of two books on Bing: the first by Kathryn Crosby and the second by Gary Crosby. I suppose that it's easy to form strong opinions about these books, but never lose sight of the fact that, good or bad, they do serve to keep Bing's name in the public view. There is as you've heard, a third book on Bing available, and it's produced right here in Melbourne by one of our members - Ted Paradissis.

The club's cassette library continues to provide a regular and useful service to many members. This gives me the opportunity to once again draw your attention to the Keith G Hyde bequest tapes which form an important part of our collection. Keith was one of the best known and best loved Crosby collectors in the world and on his passing in 1980, his widow, Edna, donated part of his huge tape collection to the society for the use of members. I'm delighted to be able to say that those tapes are as popular today as when we first introduced them. Certainly a fitting tribute to Keith.

Let me wind up by thanking a few people. Neville Wragg and Clarke Sinclair for donating the time on 'Remember When' on 3AW to allow us to publicize the society; Wally Hamblin, our hard-working projectionist; Mobil, for donating these facilities; and of course, our committee - those mentioned earlier - Jim, Les and Keith and also Ken Orren, Bill Bennett, Josie Conway, Sylvia Harding and George Styles. Thank you all for your time and efforts.

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ELECTION RESULTS

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It almost goes without saying that the same team was elected to run your Society for another year. See page 2 for the complete rundown. It is true of the Victorian Bing Crosby Society, as it undoubtedly true of most organizations of this kind run by a committee, that the people who most enjoy themselves in the club, are the committee themselves! Although we do not have any vacancies at present, we are always interested in hearing from people who might like to donate their services.

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TREASURER'S REPORT

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RECEIPTS

Membership payments	$1001.37
Cassette library	$103.00
Sale of records	$903.00
Film night entrance & raffles	$1387.70
BBQ entrance fees	$249.00
Bing Crosby Historical Society donations	$183.00
Rumpoles deposits	$670.00
Bank Interest	$16.41
Misc	$162.26
	$5651.10
Cash on hand 16.9.82	$975.36
Add receipts	$4675.74
	$5651.10
Less Payments	$5593.03
Cash at bank 30.9.83	$56.07

EXPENDITURE

Film Hire	$330.00
Books, cassettes, rec.	$1730.23
Raffle prizes	$278.81
International Sinatra Society - printing	$793.80
BBQ	$350.00
Rumpoles	$745.00
Australia Post	$540.43
Envelopes	$307.20
Donation Bushfire App.	$50.00
Donation Hist. Society house appeal	$208.00
Customs duty	$84.24
Aust. Post Box rental	$38.00
Hi-fi repair	$25.81
Misc	$99.65
FID tax	.71
FDT tax	$2.65
Cheque book	$2.50
Returned cheque	$8.00
	$5595.03
Cash at bank 30.9..83	$56.07
	$5651.10

Reconciliation statement

Balance as per bank statement	$223.07
Less unpresented cheque	$167.00
Balance as per cash book	$56.07

Keith Dorman, Treasurer.

Bing sings, the world listens . .

THE ONE WORD that sums up the social phenomena of the American way of life is "Americana." The man who in his own lifetime has become the legendary epitome of that word is Harris Lillis Crosby, known universally as just plain Bing, Der Bingle, or the "Groaner."

Bing—he acquired the name through his addiction to a comic strip called the *Bingville Bugle*—arrived at the peak of his profession as a result of seemingly effortless acumen. At least, that is the impression gained by those who know him only from his films, radio programmes and records. His easy, likeable drawl and smooth delivery reflect a mind which remains relaxed under almost any circumstances.

Dinah Shore has said that Bing sings like all men think they sing in the bathtub.

His performances at rehearsals or recording sessions are really something to see. Usually he turns up at the last minute dressed in an old and disreputable felt hat, the tails of a bright tartan-like shirt dangling airily over an ancient pair of sports slacks. (It is said by those in the know that Bing *does* possess a suit, but few can remember seeing him wearing it except at the christenings of his four sons.) The sound man signals him the cue. Bing flicks his gum into the corner of one cheek, fixes his pipe firmly between his teeth and gives with the million-dollar notes.

It hasn't always been that easy. His tough apprenticeship in dreary, beery nightspots and hick vaudeville shows called for long hours, long treks from town to town, much humping of "props" and baggage—and the know-how of slugging sluggers.

Once at a dime-a-dance palais, a women-wise character yelled, "Hey, Pansy!" Bing stepped down unhurriedly from the band-stand and neatly felled him with a snappy right and left to the jaw. He didn't worry over the loss of his job: Joe Bumptious had lost a couple of front teeth . . .

Bing always belittles his success, maintaining that most of it is due to his mother's prayers. He is not conventional, but he believes passionately in Heaven, Home and Mother. Much of his success, however, he owes to Jack Kapp, President of Decca, who steered him away from jazzy vocalizing and believed in him when no one else did.

One from the family album : even at 16, the Crosby ears were outstanding

He worked for the moment when people would say of Bing : "Isn't there anything that guy can't sing ?" And that's what the customers have been saying now for the last ten years. Bing's repertoire includes Victor Herbert, Gershwin, Stephen Foster, religious and Hawaiian songs, cowboy ballads, red-hot ditties and songs from a dozen different lands. He recognizes his friend's loyalty and good judgment not only by recording exclusively for Decca, but also by refusing to sing a note at recording sessions without Kapp.

Publicity Bing shies away from because he has a genuine fear of being thought a show-off. There is no question of introvert affectation as jealous smart-alecs try to make out. There are set hours for work and set hours for pleasure. And he adamantly declines to have them mixed up by advertising stunts.

Saturday morning he spends at his colonial-style home situated atop one of the seventy exclusive Holmby Hills (near Beverley Hills), clowning around with his four sons, Gary, twins Phillip and Dennis, and Lindsay, aged 13, 12 and 8 years respectively.

Bing was born in Tacoma, Washington, on May 2nd, 1901, of Catholic parents and the fourth of seven children, Larry, Everett, Ted, Catherine, Mary Rose and Bob. "A problem child. Yessir, a problem child. Always runnin' off and gettin' himself in some kinda trouble. Hear the Truant Officer was up at the Crosby place agin to-day." So the talk flitted around the town, reaching the unwelcome ears of Poppa Crosby at his work in the office of the local brewery.

Home evenings, he regularly clambered upstairs to re-introduce his erring son to the back of his hand. But the only time Bing ran away from home it was with the idea of becoming a baseball player. The trip did not lead to the coveted "diamond" and wildly cheering fans. It led to hunger and two nasty gashes in his legs received from an axe he had been swinging in a lumbercamp to earn himself a meal.

After that escapade he settled down quietly with the family when they moved into their new home at Spokane, also in Washington, suffering from nothing worse than a healthy admiration for lumberjacks. In a sudden spirit of atonement for former misdeeds, he bowed to his mother's wish that he become an eminent barrister, entering Gonzaga, a Catholic University. There he studied law, and more important, he met Al Rinker, a fellow student who was looking for someone to play drums in the school band.

Bing and Al were a "natural" together. They played one-night stands six nights out

With Mary Carlisle in "College Humor": his early rôles were out of character

of seven, raking in anything from 40 to 50 dollars a week for their trouble. Now Bing had a great many young lawyer friends and he knew that very few of them earned 50 dollars a week.

When he saw Al again he said: "Let's hit for Los Angeles. Maybe there's some more of this easy dough down there?" Trouble was they were all set to graduate next term in the class of 1924. Bing had a long chat with his mother. She did the rest, placating irate Crosby Senior and Rinker's parents; she even helped out to the extent of providing the two boys with a battered old jalope.

On a fine summer's morning they left Spokane and began the first leg of the 1,000-mile trip to Los Angeles, where they intended looking up Al Rinker's sister, Mildred Bailey, to-day the top songstress of American radio. By dint of much coaxing and many makeshift repairs "Mrs. Crosby's gift to two boys" landed them within two miles of Los Angeles' city limits.

Mildred got them a job at Mike Lyman's "Tent Café," and stood them a couple of man-sized meals to start the day right.

Booked as "Two Boys and a Piano," they made 65 dollars a week. From then on, they did every nightclub and vaudeville circuit along the West Coast as far as and including San Francisco, eventually returning to Los Angeles, booked this time at the Metropolitan Theatre for 65 dollars each per week. Paul Whiteman, casting around for fresh talent, dropped in one night and, liking what he saw, hired Bing and Al at a salary of 150 dollars. Teaming up in New York with Harry Barris, composer of the delightful "I Surrender Dear," they were billed as Paul Whiteman's "Rhythm Boys."

For 20 consecutive weeks they drew jazz-loving crowds into the Paramount Theatre on Times Square. Al and Harry played two pianos, while Bing beat the traps and occasionally sang. Recordings made from some of those shows have attained the status of collectors' items, notably "Mississippi Mud," "My Suppressed Desire," "From Monday On," "Bluebirds and Blackbirds," and "Rhythm King."

Deciding that his trio would go over big with movie-goers, Whiteman took them to Hollywood where they were signed up for parts in the "King of Jazz." Bing meantime, long exposed to the taunts of liquor-drinking friends, had renounced Lady Temperance.

On the very eve of the first day's shooting of the Whiteman picture, he over-estimated his capacity and under-estimated the distance between his own car and the one ahead. Came morning, and he was hauled before the judge, a crusty old beak notorious for his dislike of the film colony. He asked Bing if he was familiar with a certain amendment to the Constitution. Bing, whose law training was temporarily lost in the depths of a hangover, replied that he thought he had heard it mentioned before. Thirty days.

No amount of smooth talk from the studios could get a remission of the penalty by so much as a day, and "King of Jazz" remains Bing's only film made under a police escort, which brought him to the studios in the morning and took him home to his cell at night. Ever since this ordeal Bing has taken his drink in conservative quantities . . .

Bing, his wife Dixie Lee, and the Bing Boys: a 1940 family snap on the front porch showing Lin (in arms), Gary and twins Phillip and Dennis

Shortly after his sojourn in jail, Bing met Dixie Lee, *née* Wilma W. Wyatt of Harriman, Tennessee. When he asked her if she would marry him, she coolly answered that she could hardly be expected to marry someone who spent more than twice the amount he earned. They were wed in September 1930.

Meantime, brother Everett felt it was time Bing's capabilities were exploited along business lines. He sent copies of his brother's marriage-winning record, "I Surrender Dear," to N.B.C. and C.B.S. studios in New York. Goaded into action by his wife and Everett, Bing departed for the Big City in 1931, leaving behind him "a trail of broken bottles and unpaid bills." Unfortunately, the morning he was to have his première over a nationwide radio hookup, he finished a game of golf in a rainstorm and lost his voice.

Frantically, a doctor was called in. He quickly came to the conclusion that his patient's voice would be back to normal in two or three days. Right away everyone calmed down and stopped panicking. During his examination, the doctor unearthed a further vital fact; Bing had nodules on his vocal chords. It is these nodules, currently insured for 100,000 dollars, which endow his voice with its fine tone and range.

Paul Whiteman's pride, Rhythm Boys trio: Al Rinker (not Bob Hope), Bing and Harry Barris: later Bing dropped the moustache

Everett fixed up another broadcast and a contract with Decca on the strength of it. Soon, Bing was pulling in a steady 7,000 dollars a week from personal appearances, broadcasts and records. Everett set up offices on Los Angeles' Sunset Boulevard and in the process found jobs for other members of the Crosby clan in the newly-formed firm of Bing Crosby Ltd., Inc.

Apart from the "King of Jazz" Bing had made a few shorts for Mack Sennett and a campus comedy, called "Two Plus Fours." On the whole, however, he wasn't very hopeful about films. But when Paramount made their first "Big Broadcast" they naturally hired him along with other radio personalitiest Unlike them, Bing possessed sufficient screen-appeal for Paramount to offer him a contract for feature-length movies, the producers stipulating that he allow his ears to be glued back if necessary—something he no longer tolerates.

In 1933 he appeared in "College Humor" and "Too Much Harmony." Later the same year M.G.M. borrowed him for "Going Hollywood." His acting was not altogether a success, simply because he was forced to play out-of-character parts that turned his easy abilities into awkward ineptitudes.

Then in 1934 he made "We're Not Dressin'" and "She Loves Me Not," giving reasonably good performances in both films and definitely establishing his own peculiar brand of humour. Said a critic: "He borrows something from the deadpan slapstick school of comedy and something from the insouciant ogle of the professional masher to produce an effect of being at home and sure of himself anywhere."

The first film to allow him full scope for his talents was "Sing You Sinners," in which he played a happy-go-lucky philanderer. The fact

Bing and Bob Hope: their "Road" films are the screen's biggest comedy draw, their radio badinage is legendary feuding—privately, they remain fast friends

that he didn't get the girl freed him of cumbersome romantic trappings and formulated a pattern which has been adhered to in the majority of his subsequent movies. His brilliant and effortless characterisation won him the hearts of cinema audiences everywhere. At the same time he was also winning the hearts of a far larger audience, the millions who heard him on radio and gramophone.

When he joined N.B.C's Kraft Music Hall as its Master of Ceremonies his first few broadcasts, like his early films, were undoubtedly hammy. He spoke his dialogue in a clipped, staccato fashion that had the customers suggesting he stick to singing. Everett and the scriptwriters put their heads together and connived a scheme that worked wonders. During the broadcast, questions not in the script were sprung on him. Compelled to *ad lib*, he automatically answered in his slow, easy drawl. The programme has featured Bing as its No. 1 attraction unfailingly since 1936. The sponsers know that its popularity lies essentially in Bing's informality rather than his singing.

His contract with Paramount provides for three films a year, Bing receiving 150,000 to 200,000 dollars for each one. For each 30-minute radio session he gets 7,500 dollars, and the programme runs for 39 weeks of the year. His records bring in enormous royalties. The latest tally of his record sales puts them at 60,000,000. He makes approximately 1¼d. on every disc—and that, reader, is one for you to figure out. His best-seller is "White Christmas," which sold an all-time high of 2,000,000 copies in the U.S. and 250,000 in this country. "Silent Night," ranks second at 1,500,000 impressions.

Bob Hope once quipped about Bing's astronomical earnings: "He doesn't even pay income tax any more. He just asks the government how much they need." Receipts from his religious discs are not counted amongst his earnings; they go to charity.

Bing has tried his hand at all sorts of businesses, from a gold mine to managing an all-girl baseball team. His best yet is the Crosby Investment Corporation, which piles up interest on stocks, bonds and securities for the exclusive use of wife Dixie and sons.

Outside of home and singing, sport has always been Bing's chief interest from the time he went to a 'teen-age swimming meet and walked off with a dozen first-place medals. He is one of the finest golfers in Hollywood, rising between six and seven most mornings to play a nine-hole round with one of the club caddies. He is an avid tennis player, fisherman and hunter.

Topping all these is Bing's horse-racing passion. He owns California's swanky Del Mar Turf Club, with its racetrack and 100 acre breeding ranch nearby. Contrary to cracks of wiseacres, his Argentine and American thoroughbreds have won many races. His greatest ambition is to see one of his horses take his racing colours—"When the *Blue* of the Night Meets the *Gold* of the Day"—to first place in the Kentucky Derby.

Well, Bing, here's wishing you luck, something we'll bet even Bob Hope is doing too . . . sincerely if surreptitiously.

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MEMBER'S COMMENTS

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You may remember that your membership renewal form included a space for comments. Here is what a few of you had to say.

Kevin Sheather: Suggest more frequent outdoor functions, i.e. barbecues - allows more time for socializing.

Daryl & Margaret Thomas: As the Australian rep for the International Jolson Society, I can really understand all the problems you have. Wish everybody the best for the future.

Graham Pascoe: Any chance of influencing the ABC to play the story of Bing's life again? Should we mount a campaign?

Gordon Richardson: Some of the functions listed through the year are way beyong the financial means, I should imagine, of a great many members. At most night clubs or functions today, the music and the dancing are also way off for most of us. Surely from among all the members we should be able to make up a three or four piece band, say with a smorgasbord type supper.

James M Dobbie: Just keep up the good work, especially with the 'Crosby Voice'. It makes up, to us outside Victoria, for all the get togethers and other things we can't enjoy.

Jack Burns: The Victorian Jazz Club operates every Saturday night at the Museum Hotel in the city. On the official table, information is available on (amongst other items) the Sinatra Society. This poses the question - why not similiar details from the Victorian Bing Crosby Society? (It is now, thanks to Jack. BM)

Max Henson: Thanks Bob and the Committee for doing such a great job in running the Society.

Bob Jones: Always enjoy the 'Crosby Voice' and the article on 'The Fabulous Ed Rice Tapes' in the last issue was just great!

Ian Barnes: No complaints from me whatsoever.

Ada and Ted Paradissis: We strongly support the Society, enjoy the functions and activities, and hope you continue the good work.

(Thanks to all those members who expressed their appreciation of the work we are all doing. Now, are there any comments on the comments?)

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NEW MEMBERS

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As is our custom in the last newsletter of the year, we bring you a rundown of new members who have joined in the past 12 months.

Gordon Richardson 13 Alice St, Coburg 3058
Josinne Joly "The Hollow", Kerrie Crescent, Eltham North 3095
John Wright 19 Boyd Ave, Lugarno, NSW 2210
Dorothy Tadday 3 Adamson St, Braybrook 3019
Maurice & Dorothy Goodall 14 Lawrence Ave, Niddrie 3042
Barry Holland 106 Roberts St, Northcote 3070
Robert & Doreen Schrader 20 Harris Rd, Solomontown, Pt Pirie S.A.
Bert Edwards 13 Norray Ave, Mt Waverley 3149
James Waters 14 Cameron St, Bundaberg, Qld 4670
Bob & Betty McMenaman 17 Jassa St, South Oakleigh 3167
Ian Walker 17 Evelina St, North Box Hill 3124
Alice Schrader 14 Square St, Solomontown, Pt Pirie S.A. 5540
Enid Gerard 60 Bernard St, Cheltenham 3192
James Page 66 Castlewood St, East Bentleigh
George & Yvonne Cunningham, PO Box 115, Middle Brighton 3186
Diana Houlihan 27 Toorak Ave, Croydon 3136
Neil & Anne Blokkerus 10 Morcom Ave, Ringwood East 3135
John Porter, 89 McGowans Rd, Donvale 3111
Les O'Donnell, 47 Jamieson St, Bulimba, Qld. 4171
Les Fawcett, Caravan Gardens Caravan Park, Carrum Downs 3201
Clyde Wilson 54 Clingin St, East Reservoir 3073
Edna Devine, Swan Marsh Post Office 3249
John and Margaret Dodd, 16 Amdura Rd, East Doncaster 3109
Tracey Lee 123 Alexandra Ave, South Yarra 3141
Denis Rahilly 50a Barkly St, Mordialloc 3195
Bernard Mullens 6/463 Gore St, Fitzroy 3065
Herbert McGregor 4 Alma St, West Footscray 3012
Ron Bond 511 Belmore Rd, Box Hill North 3129
Ernie Polleykett 1 Harris St, North Melbourne 3051
Robert Twiddy 4 Margarate St, Langwarrin 3910
Kenneth Clark 2/120 Rankins Rd, Kensington 3031
Phil Gelormine Jr PO Box 388, Bound Brook, NJ 08805 USA
Janet Hoffman 2157 Vine 26½ Hollywood, California 90068 USA
Carmel Gallegos PO Box 29961, Honolulu, Hawaii 96820 USA
John Brett 4 Welch Ave , Greenacre, NSW 2190
Harold & Mavis Carson 101 Roberts St, Yarraville 3013
Colleen Field, 'Glenrowan', Balmoral Rd, Kellyville 2153

cont/22

Paramount's Musical Comedy

"STAR SPANGLED RHYTHM"

With the Greatest Galaxy of Stars Ever Gathered Together in One Picture

(New Members, continued:)

Lance & Ineke Gardam 2 Eric Court, Croydon North 3136
Glenda Mackay 8 Swinden Avenue, Cheltenham 3192
Hugh McTeigue 92 Baringa Road, Northbridge 2063
Allan Morton 2 Georgina Ave, Elanora Heights, NSW 2101
Harry Peters, 5 Orchard Rd, Chatswood, NSW 2067
Max Barry 31 Keogh St, Rosebud 3939
Stephen Lambrides 58 Guthrie St, Paddington, Queensland 4064
Keith Parkinson 16 Cartmell Rd, St Annes FY8 1DE, England
Bill and Annette Greehy 4879 Broadway (2E), New York, N.Y. 10034 USA
Alwyn Shaw 10 Broadmeadows Rd, Tullamarine 3043

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****
BITS 'N' PIECES
****

* Sad to note the passing of actor Pat O'Brien. Although Pat never actually appeared in a movie with Bing, he was a long time friend and business associate, and one of the people called upon to comment after Bing's death. His last movie appearance was only a couple of years back when he made a guest appearance with James Cagney in "Ragtime", although Cagney received all the publicity.

* In our last issue, we stated that 'Birds of a Feather' came from 'Road to Singapore'. Of course it didn't! The correct movie was 'Road to Zanzibar' but only one sharp-eyed member picked up the mistake.

* The clippings from an old LIFE magazine last issue were donated by Clyde Wilson. Sorry for the omission, Clyde.

* Mel Torme has nominated his five favourite singers. In order: Bing, Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Fred Astaire and Janis Ian. About Crosby he says "He was the breakthrough singer. He brought what I call 'off-the-elbow' singing to the forefront - natural, conversational singing. I consider good singing to be an extension of talking. He was a good friend, and I miss him."
And on Frank Sinatra: "Sinatra was the first guy to come along after years and years of singers casting themselves in the Crosby mold. He created a new, contemporary sound for singers. Superb enunciation and breath control. The biggest thing for a male singer to do is to be able to appeal to both sexes. Both Sinatra and Bing Crosby were able to do that."

****
NEW RECORD RELEASES
****

Shhh! Bing - Vol 4 - Crosbyana LLM-023

You probably won't be able to buy this record in the shops but it is available in limited quantities through the club or direct from the producer: Larry Kiner, PO Box 724, Redmond, Washington 98052-0724, USA.
It features sixteen rare and remarkable tracks from Bing - tracks which you won't find on any other record.
"Love Thy Neighbour" - alternate master, "May I" - alternate master, "Straight from the shoulder" - alternate master, "Hang Your Heart on a hickory limb" - alternate master, "Skylark" - alternate master, "All You Want to do is Dance" - unlisted alternate master recorded in 1943,SIX YEARS after Bing made the original recording! "A door will open" - unreleased master, "Hello Mom" - alternate master, "Road to Morrocco" - alternate master, "Who threw the overalls in Mrs Murphy's chowder?" - alternate master, "You belong to my heart" - blow-up recording, "Three caballeros" - alternate master, "I only want a budy not a sweetheart" - parody, "Jingle Bells" - blow up, "Christmas Greetings to New York employees of Decca" (rec. December 13th, 1940) - private record, "Duke the Spook" - unissued private record for airforce - WW2.

And that is a great collection of collectors items! As I said on page 6, we only have twelve copies of this disc available. First come, first served!

Bing and Bob - Spokane 22

Another issue from Larry Kiner, this LP features two complete half-hour broadcasts of the Kraft Music Hall on which Bob Hope was guest. The first dates from April 13, 1944, the second from June 15, 1944.

There's some very funny comedy from the boys in both shows plus the following songs. April show: Swinging on a star, Take it easy, Theone I love belongs to somebody else, Speak to me of love, It's love love love, Amor. June show: Bless 'em all, Milkman keep those bottles quiet, The day after forever, Together, Put it there pal, I'll be seeing you.

Although many complete shows from this period are now a little hard to sit through, the two on this new LP still sound fresh and entertaining. Crosby and Hope had a great act going, and their writers made the most of it whenever possible.

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COLLECTORS' CORNER
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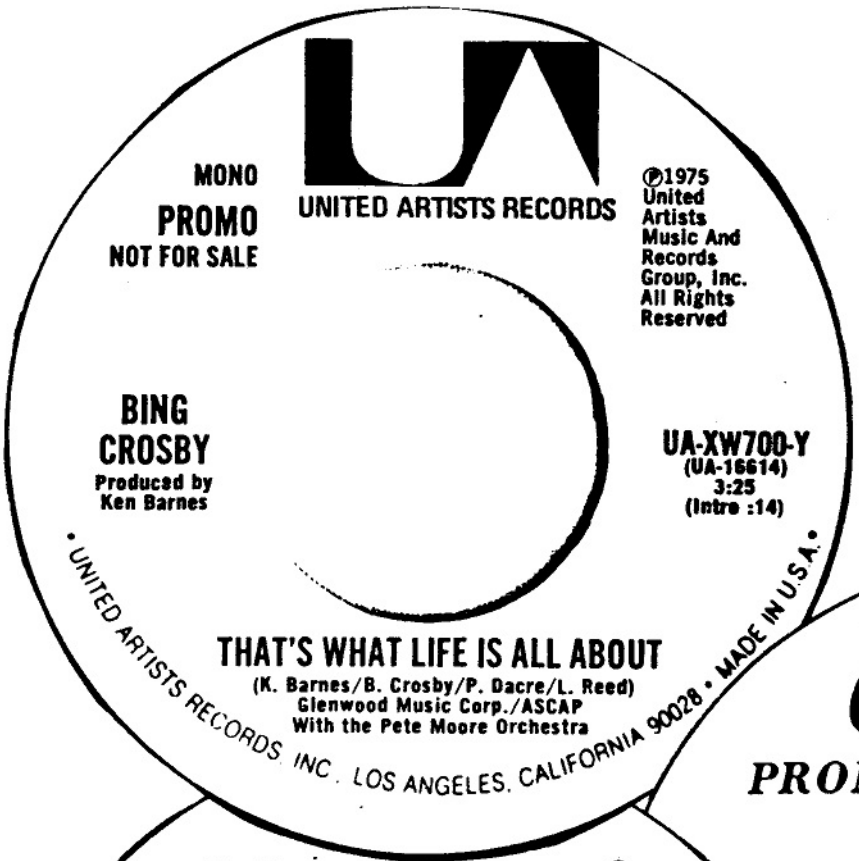
Special Promoticnal Labels

In recent times, without really trying to, I seem to have picked up a number of 'promotional' issues of Bing's records so I thought that a few of these would make an interesting feature for these pages. It almost goes without saying that 'promotional' issues are specially pressed copies of records which are sent to radio stations, etc for their exclusive use.

The five examples featured here are 'Imagination' (Dec 24, 1948), 'That's What Life is All About' (Feb 19, 1975), 'Seven Nights a Week' (early 1957), 'There's Nothing That I Haven't Sung About' (July 22, 1976) and 'Say One For Me' (March 25, 1959).

Most promotional discs are coupled with the normal release 'B' side. The exception here is 'That's What Life is All About' which is in MONO on one side (shown) and STEREO on the other!


MONO
PROMO
NOT FOR SALE
UNITED ARTISTS RECORDS
℗1975 United Artists Music And Records Group, Inc. All Rights Reserved
BING CROSBY
Produced by Ken Barnes
UA-XW700-Y
(UA-16614)
3:25
(Intro :14)
THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT
(K. Barnes/B. Crosby/P. Dacre/L. Reed)
Glenwood Music Corp./ASCAP
With the Pete Moore Orchestra
• UNITED ARTISTS RECORDS, INC. LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90028 • MADE IN U.S.A. •

LONDON
Pub: Ivanhoe Music (ASCAP)
Time: 3:42
ZDR 60005
Arranged and directed by Alan Cohen
Executive Producer: Geoff Milne
PROMOTION COPY NOT FOR SALE
STEREO
5N-20095-DJ
Produced by Kevin Daly
℗ 1976 THE DECCA RECORD CO., LTD.
THERE'S NOTHING THAT I HAVEN'T SUNG ABOUT
(L. Duddy; J. Bresler)
(From the LP: FEELS GOOD, FEELS RIGHT - PS 679)
BING CROSBY

Capitol
REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.
PROMOTIONAL RECORD
Vocal with Orchestra
(45-16693)
SEVEN NIGHTS A WEEK
(James Van Heusen-Sammy Cahn)
BING CROSBY
with Orchestra Conducted by Nelson Riddle
RECORDS, INC. U. S. A. • NOT FOR SALE • RESTRICTED TO PROMOTIONAL USE ONLY

Bing Crosby — He made crooning an art

BY TEET CARLE

Bing Crosby has remained a favorite of mine from the first day I met him -- although up until that moment I had prepared myself to dislike the man who made crooning famous.

It was my privilege to be the publicist on the first feature movie in which he had a leading role, "The Big Broadcast." And to co-create myths about how he got his nickname and why he sang with that tantalizing resonance.

It was not hard to resent a voice on the radio that did to dames what Rudy Vallee's vocal chords did earlier and Sinatra was to do later. Who enjoys having a female you're trying to charm turn you off and sigh like a hungry calf with glazed eyes while an unseen troubador mumbles "When the boo-boo-blues of the night. meets the gold of the day"?

Bob Hope told me once that in his opinion Der Bingle was the greatest singer of popular tunes who ever lived. I believed it, but that was long after the first Crosby followers at the turn of the Thirties.

I was not opposed to heeding laments, before I ever net Bing, from folks I thought ought to know the facts about how lovely, successful young Fox Studios starlet named Dixie Lee was being lured to throw away a bright career by a no-good, hard-guzzling bounder who was destined to be a loser -- this same Bing Crosby.

I was a Paramount, but I heard all about the sweetness and future stardom of this young singer. She had come to Hollywood after quick singing success through winning a contest at the age of seventeen. She was judged the girl who sang most like Ruth Etting, a big songstress of that era.

I first heard the cry of dismay from Jackie Cooper's mother, who was a personal friend of Dixie's. Jackie was doing "Skippy", which I handled, and Dixie was his idol. So his mother whispered to me what a shock Jackie would get if Dixie married "that guy." Years later, Sue Carol (Mrs. Alan Ladd), who had been a starlet with Dixie at Fox, told me that the marriage was greeted as Doomsday news at the studio. Big executives had warned Dixie that her career would go kerflop if she made that mistake.

Actually, the future Mrs. Crosby would have left show business no matter whom she married: it happened to be Bing she fell in love with. She disliked the spotlight. A couple of years after Bing had become an important star at Paramount, the studio persuaded Dixie to team with a new singing personality named Joe Morrison who had just introduced "The Last Round Up." I handled the picture, a breezy little musical. She was a charming, shy person who seemed glad when the film was finished and she could return to being a wife and mother.

Bing's reputation at the time Dixie met him while he was singing with the Rhythm Boys at the Famous Montemarte was not exactly that of a solid citizen. The papers had reported that, while he was making "King of Jazz", starring Paul Whiteman, at Universal, he had been arrested for a motor accident and booked on an HBD count (Had Been Drinking.) It was prohibition time and hootch a bit

Bing served 40 of those days. Although he was in "The King of Jazz," he was not available to sing a big solo number Whiteman had planned for him. The song was given to a young singer named John Boles, who zoomed to fame.

In later years when I worked on movies with Bing, I had moments of great admiration for the guy who had chosen early in stardom to put the cork firmly in the bottle which had given him much fun in his roving musical days. I don't ever remember Bing tippling.

But in the time between the Whiteman musical and "The Big Broadcast" I had been conditioned to believe Bing was a playboy without responsibility. He seemed destined to prove correct all those bad-mouthers who predicted that Dixie would have to support him in his fun-loving way of life. He had been reduced to appearing in some Mack Sennett shorts.

At Paramount, he was cast for a singing bit in a movie I did not handle, "Confessions of a Co-Ed." A stab was made to capitalize on his name in a scene at a college dance when Phillips Holmes, the hero, fox-trotted past the band stand and called out to the soloist, "Hi, Bing." That was the total of Crosby's role.

Came 1932, and preparations to make a timely exploitation movie, "The Big Broadcast." Radio was big and full of popular personalities. Someone evolved an idea to get a bundle of that talent in one movie. A story was written to present a sad sack who owned a small radio station who was in deep trouble. That would be Stuart Erwin. The girl would be Leila Hyams. This guy in trouble had a friend, a singer, who cooked up a scheme for one big broadcast that would wipe out Erwin's financial woes.

Paramount signed George Burns and Gracie Allen and sent them to Hollywood to get their comedy written in throughout the plot. What a lucky move that was. Burns and Allen became legendary and starred in many films for Paramount.

The company signed Kate Smith, the Mills Brothers, Cab Calloway, Guy Lombardo's Royal Canadians and Arthur Tracy, The Street Singer. Their specialties all were filmed in New York and I saw none of those stars in person.

By this time, Crosby had his own radio show, thirty minutes of crooning to love-sick gals. And he was headlining at the New York Paramount movie palace. Not exactly super-stardom. So all of us in Hollywood were jolted when Crosby was pacted to play that hero role. I remember folks saying, "The bosses must be nuts. Giving that part to a washed-up yodeler and passing up sure-fire future greats like Lanny Ross and Donald Novis." By the way, Lanny later was signed by Paramount and Novis did one song in "The Big Broadcast."

When I met Bing for the first time, I tossed away that falsely-motivated resentment. He not only was cooperative, but he seemed confident and lacking in any "first movie" jitters. Most everyone on the lot puzzled as to what had happened to reverse what had seemed a wasted, lost career into a sure bet.

My own answer has to lie in a person named Everett Crosby. He was Bing's oldest brother and had already been working in Los Angeles when Bing and his college buddies first came to town looking for penny-ante jobs. Just before "The Big Broadcast," Everett became Bing's manager.

Bing himself has said that he was despondent and "ready to give up" when Everett took over. I have to presume that Everett master-minded the deals. He was a fighter, a yeller and a hard bargainer. He came to be known as "the wrong Crosby." But to me, he was a huge helping hand. We both were concerned with making Bing a top personality and thus producing a block-buster in "The Big Broadcast." It was all that.

One example of Everett's wheeling-dealing was the teaming of Bing with Marion Davies in "Going Hollywood," an MGM musical. Everett negotiated for a salary of $2,000 a week (big dough then) instead of a lump sum. It took six months to make the film. In order to get Bing, MGM had to make a trade with Paramount, which had Bing under exclusive pact. Paramount got Hollywood's newest "rave", Clark Gable, for a film.

It is amusing that both personalities in the deal were noted for prominent ears. Gable originally was rejected by big producers because of his flappers. When Crosby started "The Big Broadcast", his ears were drawn far back by adhesive and spirits gum. Bing hated the practice, as he fought against heavy make-up. By the way, he did submit to toupees from the start but tried at all times to avoid the "rugs" by wearing hats.

I recall that one of Bing's earlier movies required some re-takes on a sequence. A make-up man unfamiliar with the ear problem let the ears sing wide. Since editors used some original footage and some retakes, Bing's ears gave the effect of slow-motion flapping. He was long gone before the phenomenum was discovered. From that film on Bing's ears were permitted to stay unimpeded.

A less-known physical peculiarity about Bing had not come to my attention until 1933, shortly after his first son, Gary (named after Gary Cooper), was born. Bing came into my office with mail he had picked up. A fan had sent a knitted sweater for the new baby. He asked me, "Isn't blue supposed to be the color for boy babies?"

I assured him he was right. He held up the sweater. "Isn't this pink?" I said, "No, it's blue. Does it look pink to you?" He grinned. "Yeah! I'm color blind."

Everett used to come to my office to help with publicity ideas. Brother Larry was to join Bing later in charge of public relations. One day, I asked Everett. "How'd Bing get that nickname" He wasn't sure. I suggested, "Could he have gone around with a wooden pistol as a kid shouting "Bing! Bing!"? He said it sounded typical of his kid brother. I wrote the story. It got printed widely.

Amused, Bing said the story was wrong. A boyhood pal in Spokane had hung the name on him because Bing's favorite character in a newpaper comic feature, The Bingville Bugle, was named Bingo.

The explanation for the "boo-boo" singing was easily and logically explained by Everett. Instead of humming or whistling on second choruses, Bing warbled the boo-boo-boo stuff.

That deep-throated, meliferous vocalizing? Everett said Bing once had overworked his vocal chords in an air conditioned room. "His voice changed," he said. "Maybe, in healing, he grew warts on those chords," I offered. Everett grinned. "Yeah and a doctor probably said he could remove them but that might turn him into a falsetto."

It sounded great. Imagine a super-star doomed to keep warts thriving in his throat in order to insure a career. We called the research library. Gladys Percey, the librarian, found that worts growing on inside membrane are called nodules.

"That's a great word," Everett said. "Let's go to press."

That story, too, got printed and reprinted. Sounds correct to this day. Maybe that's because it is a fact. I hope so. †††

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LETTERS

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From Les Sutcliffe, Brighton

The rare magic of Bing's wonderful vocal chords topped out in the late 1940's. Agree? Hurrah for the 30's and Heaven bless Keith Hyde and his widow's generosity to the club.

From Vern Taylor, Oregon

(Commenting on the new Broadway Intermission release of the Ed Rice tapes) Happily, Stan Hester has once more come up with a very attractive record. He has had it produced in beautiful light-blue clear vinyl and reproduced a sketch of Bing on one label, in antique style, with blue scroll lettering on white.

I received, a few weeks back, two overseas Bing LP's, one from Czechoslovakia (Seasons) and one from the Soviet Union, with one Bing in a collection of other English-speaking artists. I am still looking, of course, for one from Red China, Formosa or any other unusual countries for that matter.

From Wig Wiggens, Virginia

I continue to be very envious of film evenings described in 'The Voice'. I have never seen most of the films Bing made between 1932 and 1940. (I was too young, ha! and only went to cowboy movies in those days.) They never, but never, run any of Bing's early movies on television here. If I ever get down to Australia, you can bet I will try to make it to one of your evenings.

From Frank Murphy, Tyne and Wear

The Bing Crosby Photoclub is having a remarkable success and I'm considerably encouraged at the volume of mail lately. Our plans for the future will see the release of many rare and great shots of the maestro and I'm sure the Crosby world will be all the richer for our efforts. The miniature I have supplied for your cover is one of around 50 colour shots of Bing that will see their way into our catalogue over the next two years and this particular beauty will be released in March 1984 in size 5 x 7.

From Fernando Caldos, Brazil

From different collectors, I have received lists of Bing's performances in different broadcasts, but many of the lists are incomplete. Could you guide me to who could supply me with a comprehensive listing?

(Can anyone help Fernando. His address is PO Box 07-0477, Brasilia, DF-BRAZIL. BM)

From Arnold Baker, Bangor

By far the favourite service I provide nowadays, is a special one in which I do tapes of any 30 songs from "Bing, just for the record", but at a 50% higher cost than ordinary club tapes of course. People are falling over themselves to get the songs they missed, and maybe have never heard. One fella sent for 210 songs, one fella 120, many 30 and only this week, a chap wants sixty LP's on tape (the rarer ones!) plus 278 songs!!! By far the most popular period of Bing's career is 1937 to 1949 and I suppose that that figures. It's mine too. However, one song I am constantly asked for is missing from my chronology: "Ooh, Maybe It's You" from 22nd August, 1928. Perhaps it's one of those arguable ones. Do you have any knowledge of this disc?

(You're right Arnold, this is one of those arguable ones. The disc first came to attention several years ago when a well-known English collector claimed that he could hear Bing's voice in the vocal chorus and that therefore it was a bona fide Crosby disc, despite the fact that Bing's name does not appear on the Victor recording sheets of the time. Whilst it is true that Bing is hard to pick in some of those early 'vocal chorus' records, I must say that I have trouble in hearing him on this disc. My copy is on US Victor and in good condition, but it doesn't sound like Bing to me. Would anyone care to add their opinion on this matter? BM)

From Ken Twiss, Tacoma

The next year will be an exciting one for the Bing Crosby Historical Society for several reason. First we will hopefully acquire Bing's birthplace. Then, in 1984, the city of Tacoma will observe its centennial with a year long celebration. The BCHS has been asked to have its Tribute highlight the month of May. We now have the support of the Downtown Tacoma Association and the Tacoma, Pierce County Chamber of Commerce. So we are very optimistic about the future.

From Richard Pearson, Arlington

It's a shame that I'll miss the 'Bing Tribute' when I'm in England in late October. Perhaps next year. I will see Renee Chester though and I'm really pleased about that. She has a tremendous video collection as you no doubt know.

From Vern Taylor (again)

The shot of the "Crosby Family Album" is a mystery. Ed Rice thinks it may have merely been a phoneyed-up shot by Kraft as part of a publicity spread. Read the captions. Some of them are rare indeed!

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MORE BITS 'N' PIECES
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* Canadian Sheldon O'Connell's new book on Bing "Bing Crosby, A Voice For All Seasons" is due out by this Christmas. No word yet on whether it will be available in Australia, but we will try to import a few copies if it is not.

* In our last issue we asked if anyone could identify the song by Bing that was used in the movie 'Frances'. New member Keith Parkinson advises us that the song is 'Love is so terrific' featuring Bing with the Andrews Sisters and the version used was taken from the Philco Radio Time Broadcast of March 31st, 1948. Bing did not record this song for commercial release.

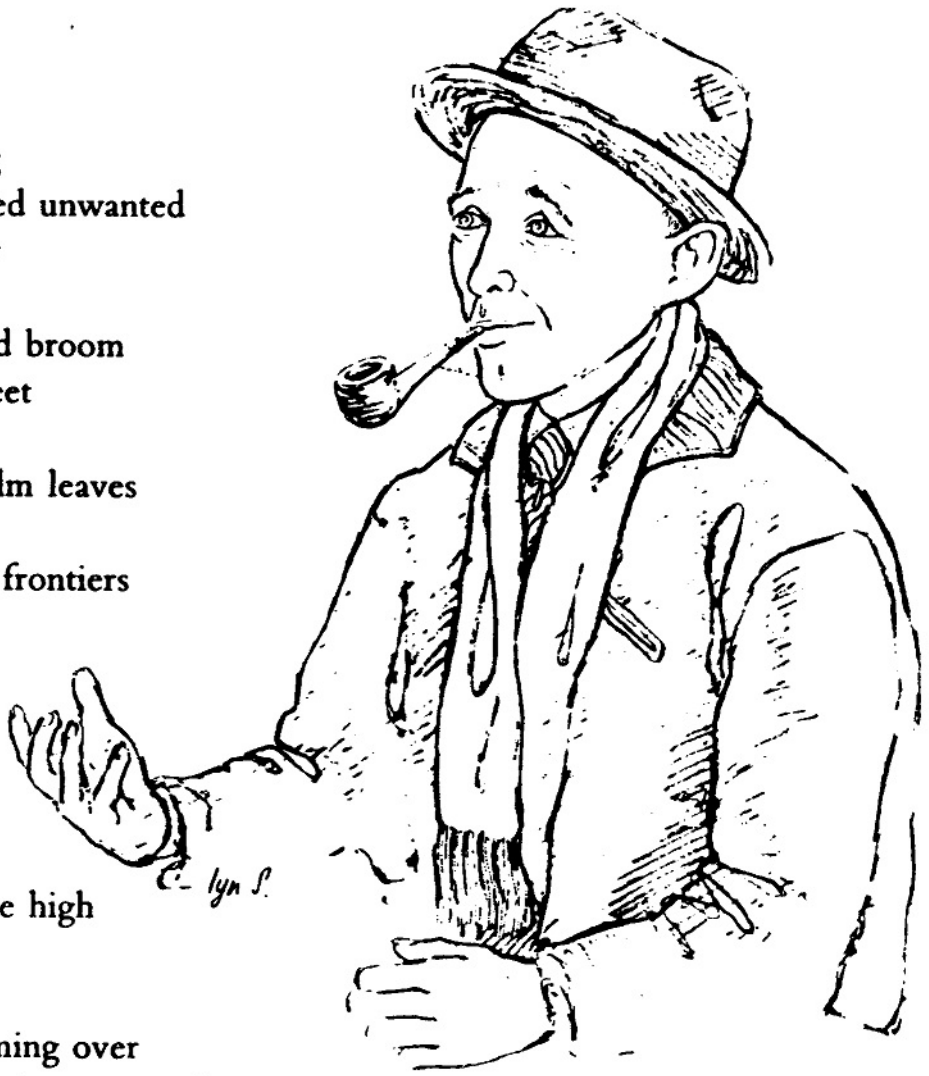
* Richard Pearson sometime ago advised us of the existence of an annual publication known as 'The International Fan Club Directory' and suggested that we write to the publisher to have this Society's name included. We did just that and a few weeks ago, a copy of their 1984 Directory arrived. It contains details of hundreds of fan clubs around the world - from the Paul Anka Fan Club to the Norma Zimmer Fan Club (who?). We received not only a full page display but also an alphabetical listing. If you are interested in obtaining a copy of this publication, write to Blanche Trinajstick, Editor, The International Fan Club Directory, 2730 Baltimore Ave, Pueblo, Colorado 81003, USA. Cost is US$3.00 but you should probably addpostage to that. Safer to write first and enquire - and why not enclose a couple of internation al reply coupons from your post office to pay their return mail.

* Bing gets a mention in the recently published book 'Saigon' by Anthony Grey (Pan Books). 'Saigon' is a fictional work covering 50 years in the history of Viet Nam. Apparently, at the very end of the Viet Nam War in 1975, the pre-arranged signal for the evacuation of those Americans remaining in the country was this message broadcast over American Armed Forces Radio: "The temperature in Saigon is 105 degrees and rising" followed immediately by Bing singing 'White Christmas' - repeated every fifteen minutes. It's an excellent book - all 747 pages and very hard to put down.

* "THE BING BOOK OF VERSE" (extractover page) is available from this Society for $5 (plus $2 packing and postage if required) or for $6 from Angus and Roberston shops in the City, Camberwell and Doncaster. Also from LaTrobe University Bookshop and Bruno's Bookshop, Foster.

In A City Avenue

we are walking
in a city avenue
talking hard against
the winter wind hustling
as it frightens the huddled unwanted
orphans yesterday's dirty
newspapers hunted
from the sweeper's broad broom
down a cold gloomy street
bustling the wind
chases rootless refugee elm leaves
scurrying
along the footpath's lost frontiers
in the dusk
in the bay a yacht
flutters its doubtful
wings as it sails
across the moon
navigating the ocean sky
in a waving dark park the high
wild birds beating
against the wind follow
their own shadows skimming over
lawns flower-beds lawns obscure ponds
close to us
from an open window floats
Bing's unalloyed voice
crooning a friendly tune
we are touched by it a new
soft breeze in a city avenue
gleaming as
smiling at each other we stand
suddenly silent



(From 'The Bing Book of Verse' by Ted Paradissis. For further details, see previous page.)

Star's Bing Crosby winner on his way down memory lane

THOUSANDS of entries cascaded into the STAR for our Bing Crosby contest — and the winner was Douglas Lembke of Waterloo, N.Y.

Douglas, 28, won the contest with his essay on which of Bing's movies is his favorite and why.

For his efforts, he gets a bonanza of the late superstar's memorabilia auctioned by Bing's widow, Kathryn. The prizes include Bing's top hat and pipe and an original and rare recording of his hit song I've Got the Girl from his private collection.

Douglas is also now the proud owner of the plaque naming Bing a general in the USO in 1975, a brass fishing reel engraved with Bing's name and his old wicker fishing basket.

Douglas Lembke really has something to croon about as he shows off Bing Crosby's top hat, pipe and recording of I've Got the Girl — prizes in the STAR's Bing Crosby contest.

(TOP: Bing with Bob Burns and Rose Bampton - late 30's KMH.
BOTTOM: Bing and Burns again, similiar period.)

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THINGS FOR SALE
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* COLOUR PHOTOS OF BING

The colour photo on the cover of this issue is a miniature supplied by Frank Murphy from his Bing Crosby Photoclub. Normally, all photos are 5" x 7" and cost 40p.
There are many issues every year but you have to be a member of the Photoclub to buy them. Cost p.a. to join is UK £3.00, Continent £4.00 and overseas £8.00. When you join, you receive three photographs plus two photographic badges.

Please make all payments to: Frank Murphy
32, Ferndale Ave
Wallsend
Tyne and Wear NE 28 7NE
ENGLAND.

* BING TAPES.

Arnold Baker operates a service called 'Tapes Exclusive' and can supply Crosby on either cassette or reel to reel tapes for quite reasonable cost. His latest catalogue lists 136 tapes covering every imaginable Crosby recording - films, broadcasts, etc.

For details, write to: Arnold Baker
48 Groomsport Rd
Bangor
Co. Down
Northern Ireland BT20 5LR

* BING DISCOGRAPHY

The best Crosby discography available in the world today is "BING - JUST FOR THE RECORD " which lists every commercial release in both chronological order and alphabetical order. The cost is £4.50 (surface mail) or £6.50 (air mail) to Australia or £3.50 in the UK or £4.00 or £6.00 in the USA.

Send your bank draft or IMO to: JOHN JOYCE (BOOKBINDERS)
Saltmeadows Rd
Gateshead
Tyne and Wear NE8 AH3
ENGLAND

This book is recommended to anyone who has even a small collection!

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FROM OUT OF THE PAST

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(From unidentified source, March 1938)

The old theatrical tradition, "The Show Must Go On!" was nobly illustrated Thursday night when the Kraft Music Hall carried on, in its sprightliest vein, against all odds. Millions of listeners, settling comfortably by their radios that night, heard the announcement at the beginning of the show, that because of flood conditions in Hollywood, the show would be broadcast to San Francisco, and thence by telephone to the complete NBC network.

None of the audience could guess that in the studio itself, Maestro Crosby, Arkansas' favourite son, Music Hall veterens and guests alike, stood about in a studio partially lighted in the old-time Van Buren manner, by a wide assortment of lanterns. With candles retailing at a dollar each in the entire Los Angeles area, the collection of sufficient lanterns to light studio stage and control room was in itself quite a production problem on the show. The lighting system, which had been going on and off at the studios throughout the day, however, lived up to the tradition of the theatre, too - and carried on throughout the Music Hall Hour.

Behind the scenes, though, was the story of weary men splashing about in hip boots, wading in the streets turned into roaring rivers - of engineers plotting lines and circuits, checking power plants and wave-lengths. Although it was dry in the NBC Hollywood studio where Bing and his crowd gathered, outside a rowboat was a comfort and a power boat a luxury to replace the family limousine.

The program was fed over a temporary telephone line from Hollywood to KFI, Los Angeles, from where it was radioed to the RCA Communications at Point Reyes, California - 470 miles away. Directional receiving equipment there made it possible to pick up the program perfectly and send it over established telephone lines to NBC San Francisco studios, from where it was fed to the network. The accomplishment can best be realized if one attempts to tune in a station 200 miles away and bring through a clear signal on a powerful set at home.

Additional flood note: Bob Burns probably suffered the greatest property loss of anyone in the radio colony. Water rushing down the hillside out back of his home impaired the foundations and flooded the basement, ruining the heating system, a playroom, gymnasium and laundry.

(From unidentified source, June 1939)

Bing has set a lot of fashions in his time, despite his notorious preference for non-matching al fresco sartorial details. He's set the whole world to singing his tunes - and he's inaugurated another style that has the whole master-of-ceremonies world a-dither. KMHers will remember a Thursday last year when Bing decided to present a "masked marvel" on the show, introducing him to the public as the great unknown baritone, Signor Giovanni Colonna. The public loved the Signor - and news hawks finally revealed that the exotic baritone was none other than Jerry Colonna, just one of the boys in the orchestra, to whom Bing gave a break. As a result of the Crosby introduction, the fad seems to have spread like wildfire in clubs, theatres and front parlors.

(From Hollywood Reporter, October 23, 1933)

Paramount - Crosby still at odds on 'Alice'

Paramount is still trying to make a deal with Crosby to play the role of the Mock Turtle in "Alice in Wonderland". Crosby has been in and out several times and it now looks as though the crooner will do the role. The trouble arose when Crosby asked to be paid the same sum that he gets for a regular feature, and Paramount figured differently because all the roles in the picture are bits.

(From Hollywood Reporter, October 30, 1933)

Crosby Definitely Out of 'Wonderland'.

After being in and out of 'Alice in Wonderland' several times, Bing Crosby is now definitely out because the studio would not agree with the crooner's demands. At first, Crosby wanted to be paid for a full picture with the assignment only carrying a few days work, though all the other players doing the roles received compensation for only part of the full picture salary. Then Crosby asked Paramount to give him permission to do one picture on the outside next year if he played in the picture, with the studio stamping a foot down on that. So Crosby will not be in the picture after all unless the crooner gives in in the next day or so.

(He didn't, and what a pity! Bing as the Mock Turtle in 'Alice in Wonderland'. Now that would have been something to see! BM)

From Hollywood Reporter, July 20, 1933)

Davies Asks For Crosby

MGM is talking to Paramount on a deal for the loan of Bing Crosby. Marion Davies has put in a request for the player for her next picture.

(From Hollywood Reporter, July 13, 1935)

PARA STRING ON CROSBY
Company has final verdict on story, lead, director, films and sayso on releasing.

Paramount will be the virtual dictator over the picture which Bing Crosby will do for Emanuel Cohen, will have the last say as to what type of film the crooner will make, and will also release it, if it finally meets with the studio's approval.

Under the terms of Crosby's contract with Paramount, and an agreement reached with John E. Otterson, the studio has the final sayso on the story, leading woman and the director. Further, the company reserves the right to meet any bids on release and, if Paramount should not care to take the picture, it cannot be released by any other company at a time when it will affect Paramount's distribution of a Crosby film. In return, Otterson promised Crosby that the studio will give all co-operation possible in the making of this outside picture.

Around 50% of the finances for the Cohen picture will be supplied by Crosby who , incorporated, uses this method to meet the corporation law provisions that surplus cash cannot be carried over a certain time without being invested. Remainder of the cash will be provided by Cohen, with a local investor and a Chicage banker reported to be supplying most of the producer's coin.

It is not expected that the picture will be started for at least four months. Neither the producer or the singer-star has a story in mind as yet.

(The picture that ultimately eventuated was probably 'Pennies from Heaven', produced at Columbia. BM)

(From the Los Angeles Times, May 2, 1954)

BING MAY SING GOODBYE TO SONG AND START AS AN ACTOR AT 50.
Bing Crosby, the Caliph of the Carefree, hits 50 today. The date may go down in show business history as the birth of the new Crosby - a serious non-singing actor. Bing is ready to turn dead serious on us after a lifetime of casual banter. The teenagers want their crooners young and the middle-aged set wants Liberace. So look for a Crosby movie without songs. It's coming. What does Bing think of such a project? We quote, "The serious stuff is just a breeze after making musicals."

Excellent Actor

Bing is an excellent actor, much better than many people realize. He was all for leaving songs out of "Little Boy Lost" but the Paramount front office said the public was not ready for a tuneless Crosby. Some see Bing's yen to dispense with songs as a result of a serious dip in his record sales. A Decca executive recently said that the kids who make up the bulk of the record-buying public are not buying Bings. To the teenagers, he's just Gary Crosby's father.

Bing may be 50 but he doesn't look it. With a toupee, he's plenty young. Romantically, he flutters the hearts of some of Hollywood's younger set such as Mona Freeman, Mary Murphy and Grace Kelly. Miss Freeman still remains the No 1 interest, although both laugh at wedding talk. She is a divorcee; Bing is a Catholic. "If Bing ever married Mona," reports one friend, "he'd loose half his box office. He's the Catholic's favourite actor."

But Bing has never been one to care much what people think about him, one way or the other. Even intimates confess that they don't know Bing yet; he is so unpredictable.

Plans for Future

What about some other Crosby plans for the future? Television for instance. He believes that a weekly television show would kill him off. "I don't want people to say, 'Oh no, not him again'."

He'll do television periodically, but not regularly. "To reduce it to arithmetic," says Bing, "I get $200,000 for a movie that takes about nine weeks to make. If I made nine TV films, they would also take nine weeks and I would get $90,000."

What about the fabulous Las Vegas night club offer? One big hotel reportedly offered him $50,000 a week. The answer: "I'll never be a shill for anyone to lose money."

It'll take more than money to put Bing on the road again. He owns a couple of oil wells plus West Coast distribution rights for a frozen juice concern. The far-flung Bing Crosby enterprises markets everything from television films to toy dogs. (END)

And that's where we'll wind up this edition of 'The Crosby Voice'. I hope you've enjoyed this issue and I look forward to seeing you on December 5th. If I don't, may I take the opportunity now to wish you a Happy Christmas and a successful 1984.

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BACK PAGE SPECIAL

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TOUGH NEW LAWS ON BING

(This headline together with this photograph actually appeared on the front page of the Melbourne Herald on the day that Bing was released from hospital for treatment of his back injury, midway through 1977. Of course, the 'O' that was part of the last word has fallen off, and that's it at the bottom right!)

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